

International Student Recruitment for Dutch Higher Education

A Discussion Workshop

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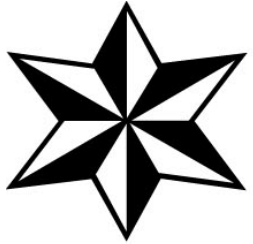
Code of conduct
Higher Education

Peter Birdsall

- Active in international Dutch higher education since 1996
- 5 years in funded higher education
- 15 years in private higher education
- Chair of Board – Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences
 - Apeldoorn, Amsterdam, Vienna (2017)
 - 600 students (2016)
 - 80 nationalities (2016) (85% international)
 - 25 nationalities in staff 50% non Dutch
 - 2/3 of the board with an international background






Strategic Partner



University of Brighton

- 22,000 Students at 4 campuses in the UK
- 4 Master and 2 Bachelor programmes, joint delivered at Wittenborg Apeldoorn & Amsterdam
- Joint delivered programmes expected to increase in coming years

Agenda

- Working with agents 
- Alumni and recruitment 
- Marketing from within the binary system 

Introduction: why we do it / why they do it

- Why recruit international students?
- Motivation behind recruiting international students – why do it?
- The competition, who are they, why are they competitors?
- Who are your competitors?
- What motivates the customer to study abroad?

Possible Motivators

- Ranking
- Specific programmes;
- Brands;
- Fees;
- Scholarships
- Visa regulations
- Post study work
- English language environment

Are we talking 'sales' – basic business?



A Quick Example of Sales in One Country

- This video from the British Council (Israel) gives an impression on how the UK targets marketing per country.

<https://youtu.be/hJqDsFjyePQ>

UK – a serious player –can NL compete?

- UK universities
 - Many over 20% international students (non-EU)
 - Example: Edinburgh University
 - student population of just over 33,000:
 - 13% are international students from other EU countries
 - 28% are international students from non-EU countries

International student numbers by UK nation and English regions 2014-15

Country	Total international students	% of student population who are international
England	356,820	19%
Scotland	50,015	22%
Wales	24,230	18%
Northern Ireland	5,525	10%
UK	436,585	19%

Source: [HESA First Statistical Release 224 \(2014-15\)](#) [↗] Table 1a and Chart 4.
Note that Total = full time, part time non-UK students (EU and non-EU)

Re-cap Netherlands

- Number of international students (2014-15) in the Netherlands: more than 90,000
 - 56,288 European degree students enrolled.
 - 22,802 non-European degree students enrolled.
 - 10,298 Erasmus students on study exchange or placement.

Top 10 Countries of origin students in Austria		Top 10 Countries of origin students in the NL	
Germany	26.746	Germany	24.815
Italy	7.605	China	4.638
Turkey	2.740	Belgium	2.288
Bosnia/ Herzegovina	2.098	Bulgaria	1.563
Hungary	1.744	Greece	1.475
Serbia	1.739	Italy	1.234
Bulgaria	1.566	Romania	1.036
Romania	1.331	France	1.020
Slovakia	1.085	Poland	1.016
Iran	1.021	Indonesia	910

Table 1: Top 10 nationalities of incoming students in Austria and the Netherlands (Unesco, 2016).

Top Ten UK Comparison & Agents!

Data obtained from 158 UK higher education institutions under the Freedom of Information Act:

reveals that all but 19 UK elite or specialist institutions now use agents to enrol non-European Union students.

Times Higher Education 2015

Top Ten non-EU sending countries

Country	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
China (PRC)	89,540	87,895	83,790
India	18,320	19,750	22,385
Nigeria	17,920	18,020	17,395
Malaysia	17,060	16,635	15,015
United States of America	16,865	16,485	16,235
Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region)	16,215	14,725	13,065
Saudi Arabia	8,595	9,060	9,440
Singapore	7,295	6,790	6,020
Thailand*	6,240	6,340	6,180
Pakistan	7,295	6,665	7,185

*Note that Thailand entered the top ten countries in 2014-15 and Canada fell to 11th place.

Source: [HESA First Statistical Release 224 \(2014-15\)](#) [A] Table 9

Using Agents to Recruit

- Okay so international student recruitment is a tough business there is masses amount of competition students have thousands of different ways of finding your programmes and of finding your institute how do we get more students?

How do we recruit students?

A quick comparison of recruitment methods: who uses what?

- Internet
- Word of mouth
- Feeder colleges and schools
- Other advertising media
- Agents

Why use an agent?

Data of agent usage versus other methods

Students who paid						Nationalities
Number of (New) students who have paid in 2015				218		47
Partner				5	2%	1
Exchange				5	2%	1
From an agent				33	15%	10
From internet				130	60%	42
Overstapper / Switcher				38	17%	10
Orange Tulip Scholarship				7	3%	4

Using Agents

- Is the data accessible to the recruitment team? Do you have centralised recruitment teams?
 - Who uses agents; - is it a normal trend in NL
 - What percentages of students come through agents?
 - How many agents are there?
- Can we find agent / country trends?
 - What motivates agents?
 - What risks does the use of agents bring?

What do we pay agents?

Agents were paid an average of £1,767 per non-EU recruit for UK Universities (THE, 2015)

- UK Universities spending on agents in 2013-14 totaled £86.7 million.

Question:

Should Dutch Universities (RU+UAS) publish spending on recruitment agents?

How can we reduce risks of using agents?

- Is it moral to use agents?
 - Can we decline using agents altogether?
 - Is there an agent certification?
 - Should there be a Dutch agent certification?
-
- Does the current code of conduct sufficiently cover the use of agents?

Alumni - Agents or Good Friends?

The role of alumni in international recruitment

- Who has alumni-based recruitment policies incorporated into their recruitment strategy?
 - **What does this entail?**
- Who has concrete data regarding turnover of international students recruited through alumni?
- Who pays their alumni to recruit for them?
- Have alumni become agents?

WO versus HBO; outside Campus NL

A bird is a bird.

A bird of prey is a bird.

A University of Applied Sciences is not a University

Bachelors from a research university (RU)
versus a university of applied sciences (UAS) –
any difference?

What is the value of a RU bachelor's degree
compared to a UAS bachelor's degree, in an
international context?

Lets check Naric

- Good description of difference between Research Universities and 'Universities of Professional Education', however: the end product

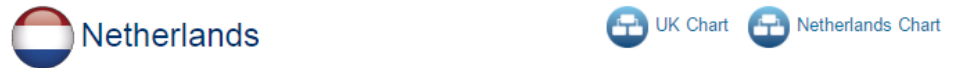


Bachelor degree

Is considered comparable to British Bachelor (Honours) degree standard

No comparability available- when awarded up to and including 2001

Awarded from 2002.



Master's degree

Is considered comparable to British Master's degree standard

No comparability available- when awarded up to and including 2001

Awarded from 2002.

Content, education concept different: final product the same?

- What is the difference in the content and style of education and how can this be best promoted?
 - Is there a clear difference in the style of education, accreditation, final qualification?
 - Are the current guidelines regarding differentiating the promotion of Research Universities and Applied Sciences Universities sufficient?

Doesn't it come back to business?



Pearson University – the new reality?

